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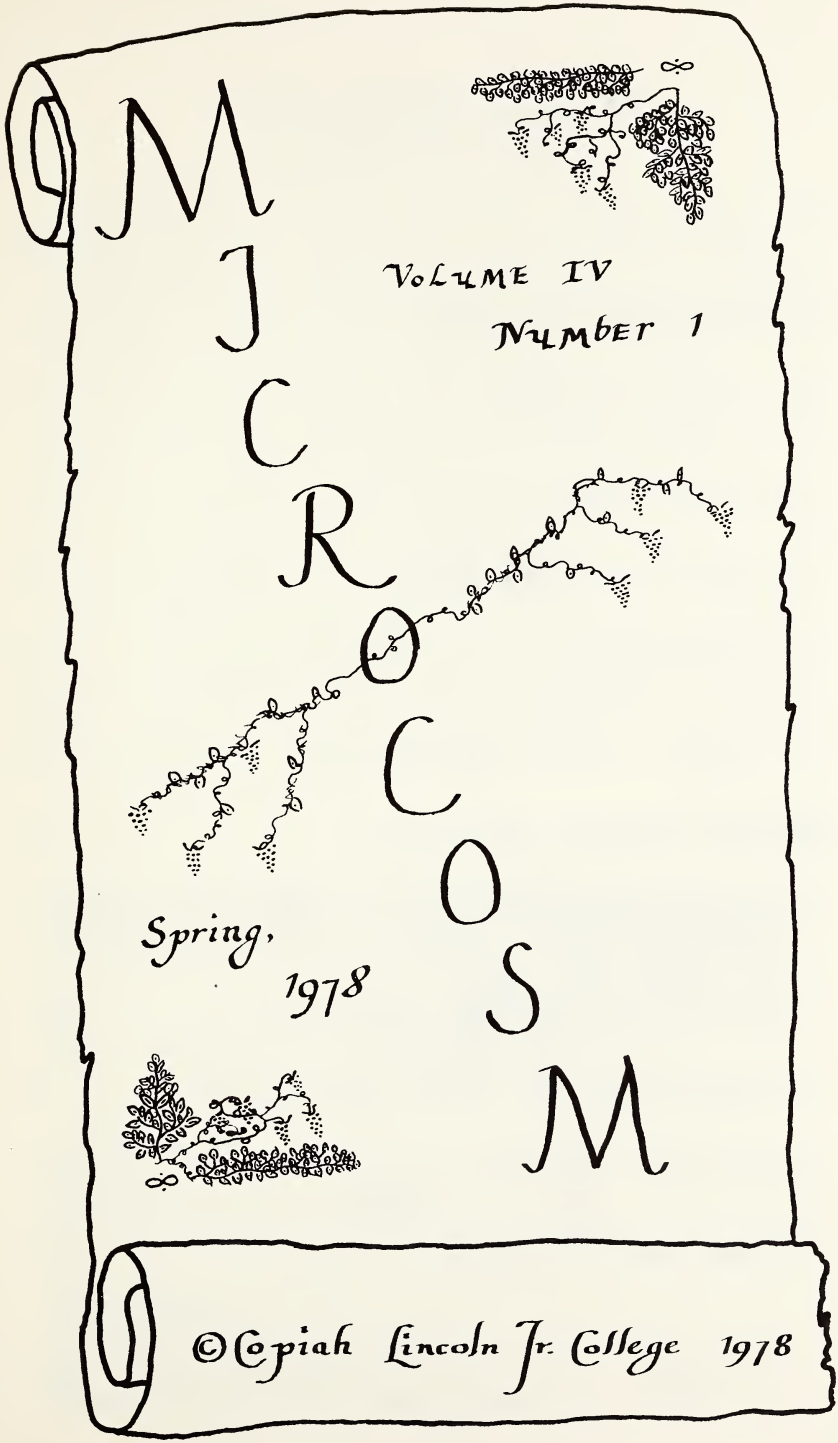
MICROCOSM
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Table of Contents

Page

"The Little Captain," George Turner 3

"Hot Off The Grill," Darlene Laws. 4

"Bubba," Anita Weeks 5

"On Summer Nights," Anita Weeks 8

"Swings," Anita Weeks 8

"The Legend of Hog Chain," Joyce Ballard 9

"Destiny . . . Unknown," Becky Summers 10

The Use of Color in "A Worn Path," Sarah Haynes 11

Alienation in "The Secret Sharer," Jeanne Turnage 13

"Now What Do You See?," Madeline Davidson 15

"Raindrops Fall," Sharon Smith 17

"One Late Cookie," Ruthie Laws 18

The Little Captain

Matthew, my four year old nephew, trudged faithfully along beside me clutching his newly built sailboat. The tall grass, in the sun-drenched pasture, seemed to almost swallow his small frame. He asked one question after another. With each one, those big blue eyes waited excitedly for an answer. "We'll know if it will sail when we get there," I answered for the hundredth time. The pond was a slick glass mirror looking up at us, as we knelt down beside it and prepared to set sail. The warm mud squished between our toes as we waded out. He placed it gently in the water, knelt down and blew, managing to wet the seat of his pants. "Just wait a minute; and the wind will catch it," I told him. "Look at it go!" he cried gleefully, as the wind filled its sails. It glided gracefully over the smooth surface of the pond. After a time he tired of his new boat and wanted to play something a little more exciting. We decided that a game of "pirates" would do nicely. However, I should have had more faith in the little "captain's" aim for with the first round of fire he hit her broadside. As she sank below the surface, he turned his little face up to me and said, "Now, let's go build another one!"

George Turner
First place informal essay senior division

Hot Off The Grill

Since regular classes began here at Co-Lin last week, I have had the unique experience of visiting a cafeteria style restaurant on campus called the "Grill." Each time I find good, warm food and relief from the tension that accompanies attending college classes for the first time in twenty years. On each visit I have never failed to meet someone new and interesting of every age (most of us not telling) with whom to relax and enjoy a short coffee break. I always know that I really should turn myself in the opposite direction of the "Grill" and go to the library to study and catch up on homework. Either the wind blows me, the traffic carries me, or thirst and hunger overcome me and I wind up unwinding at the welcoming "Grill."

If a course in "Grillology" is ever offered, mine will be the first name when they call the roll. "Grillology" will be my major and roast-beef sandwiches, hot off the grill, my minor. The ladies who run it make a delicious hot roast-beef sandwich. Of course, their special charm is the friendliness and patience they show to all of us at all times. When we push in around the cash register, trying to be polite, but crowding the ladies so that they can hardly do their job, their helpful good humor always shines through. When I walk through the doors someone always beckons me to come and share an already overcrowded table. Until being initiated to the "Grill," I never realized there is always room for one more at the table, no matter how small that table may be. Usually, the people around the table are a mixture of students and teachers thoroughly enjoying each other's company. I have not yet learned to distinguish students from teachers. I looked in my new "Student Hand Book" for a chapter entitled "Recognizing Students and Teachers in the Grill," but I guess that chapter hasn't been written. I am learning to recognize some of the good music played frequently and loudly on the Grill juke box. The music adds atmosphere but the real life of the "Grill" is the people who hurry in and out. They spend a few minutes enjoying and encouraging each other, and then they rush off to their next class. I have received very helpful advice and encouragement from people in the "Grill" and it means a great deal to me.

Darlene Laws

Second place informal essay, senior division

Bubba

Bubba "Pope" McKinley was the only Catholic kid in grammar school. Because of this and because he was one of the few people in school who could ride the merry-go-round at its top speed and still not throw up, he was the most popular boy in our fifth grade class. A few of the girls were crazy about him, my best friend included.

He was about medium height, with blonde curly hair, and small, squinting blue eyes. He wore the same red shirt with galloping stallions every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. (His mother did the wash on Tuesday and Thursday.) Our own Huck Finn, he would play baseball barefoot. Sometimes he would leave the room en route to the boys' bathroom across the hall and come back thirty minutes later with Super Dooper bubble gum, play wax harmonicas, and yellow, green, and pink candy cigars from the drugstore uptown. The teacher would make him stay in for recess.

One morning during modern math class, he nonchalantly pulled one of his pink cigars from his back pocket. He leaned back and lit it with his finger.

"I'm a millionaire tycoon," he said, as he puffed out rings of imaginary smoke. He waved the smoke away with his hands and coughed convincingly painful. "My doctor told me not to smoke because of my ulcer, But I just can't resist a good Havana cigar."

Fortunately for him, the teacher was out of the room just then. But there was one thing you could say for Bubba – he had great timing. When the teacher returned, he was studiously working on problem number four and his cigar was invisibly smouldering in his back pocket.

Marian was always trying to get on his good side. She would bring him dead crickets wrapped in Christmas paper, or empty hornets' nests in a Buster Brown shoe box. He wasn't impressed.

Bubba was a child of Nature. He would spend entire nights out in the woods, unafraid of the bears, owls, wolves, and snakes that supposedly visited him cordially beside his roaring campfire. He never slept in a tent because, "That's for women and sissies and Boy Scouts," he would snort disgustedly as he enthralled us with his woodlore.

What surprised everyone was that he always seemed to make

good grades without the benefit of cheating. True, he did talk during tests, but they were legitimate conversations either about his hunting prowess or his charming manner with women. Teachers could rarely get the best of him, thus he was almost never severely punished. He was spanked once, to our knowledge, and the principal's paddle broke after three resounding licks. If he had simply been a schoolyard hero before, he was now an unforgettable and legendary figure. It was as if, for a while, he was our liberator. We had defeated the system for once and the principal could never again command our fearful respect.

I must admit that I was slightly attracted to him, but never to the same extent as was Marian. She was simply besotted. And the terrible thing was that he never cared for her any more than he did for all the others. It was the same old tired cliche' of unrequited love. It would have been funny, had it not been so sad for Marian.

One day in the spring, Marian and I were staying in the classroom during recess to finish a Girl Scout project that should have been done the day before. The door opened and in strolled Bubba wearing his usual red shirt and his usual idiot grin. For once, he smelled as if he hadn't slept with a pack of wild dogs. He was hiding something behind his back. Marian entreated him to show us what it was.

"Well, it's for sure not for you," he snapped, quite harshly.

Marian blenched.

Bubba came over and stood before me. "Here," he said, grinning, as he shoved something in my face. It was a beat-up yellow rosebud. "It's for you. I stole it out of Old Miz Brown's yard."

I looked at him incredulously. "But I don't even like you," I said as I took the poor little flower from him. One of the few remaining petals fell noiselessly to the floor.

"I know," he said, as he flashed his insane grin and turned and walked out of the room.

Marian could have killed me just then. She kept saying under her breath "He gave you a rose – you. A rose."

"Here. You can have it," I offered somewhat apologetically. She glared at me, her green eyes full of howling demons. Our friendship never was quite the same again.

Bubba and his family moved to another town the next year. We all felt a great void after he had gone away. Because of this, Marian and I became friendly again. She never could quite forget that day, though. Sometime later when we would be engaged in

a stimulating conversation about life and the latest soap operas, her eyes would get that old familiar glazed, demonic look. She would murmur fiercely under her breath about the irony of it all. "He gave you a rose. A yellow rose."

I could hardly keep myself from laughing hysterically at her pale and stricken face.

Anita Weeks
First place short story, senior division

On Summer Nights

On summer nights, lightning bugs,
Glowing yellow like tiny cathedrals
In the dark, were our prey.
Uncapped glass jars ready for the capture —
We chased the insects who held
Candles in their stomachs.
Once imprisoned, they grew
Sluggish and lit only occasionally.
The air holes punctured on the lid
Weren't enough.
We always let them go outside,
Bored with their inactivity.
They would fly up to the trees then
And shine jointly with the
Wavering stars.

Anita Weeks
First place poetry, senior division

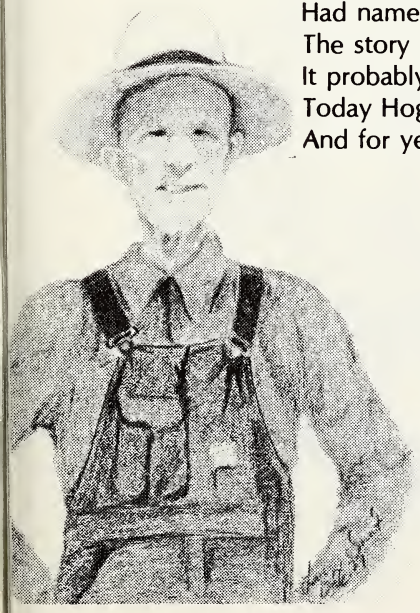
Swings

Swings, wooden seat and chain, reel in the wind.
Late March clover, red and tall for third-graders
Covers adjacent hills and flatlands.
Silver slide, hot from contact with the sun
Turns us to pine-shaded merry-go-round.
Around and around, we sing with the whisper of
Ungreased county play equipment until we are tired of
Circles and we stand on flat ground.

Anita Weeks
First place poetry, senior division

The Legend of Hog Chain

The story that follows
Has been told in the Bogue Chitto hollows
For years upon years
To people both far and near.
This legend describes the naming of old Hog Chain,
A community quite simple and plain;
Wealthy, educated people were very rare
And often the kitchen cupboard was bare.
There was an ornery old man named Samuel Sprigs,
Whose main occupation was raising pigs.
What land he owned was terribly bad
And it often drove him mad,
When the Bogue Chitto River rose over its brim
And drown the hogs that couldn't swim.
He got an idea, which was very rare,
To help him in his next despair;
The very next time it started to rain
He carefully tied his hogs with chains
And herded them to the railroad tracks,
the highest ground,
Where, he thought to himself, they would
be safe and sound.
Soon the folks passing by on the train
Had named the place Hog Chain.
The story soon traveled both near and far
It probably reached the farthest star;
Today Hog Chain still keeps its name
And for years to come will remain the same.



Joyce Ballard
Second place poetry senior division

Destiny . . . Unknown

The lonely buzzard circles above,
his destiny unknown to my watchful gaze.
He's just a small speck of blackness
against the vivid blue sky.
He seems so carefree, without a worry or doubt.
His life seems so unimportant
as he glides through the blue heavens.
I'd love to know his thoughts and pleasures.
But as I strive to get closer to him
he suddenly disappears from my view.
Uninterested and carefree,
gone forever . . .

destiny . . . unknown . . .

Becky Summers
Third place poetry senior division

The Use of Color in "A Worn Path"

In the American thought certain colors have special connotative meaning. One good example of this would be the "black hats" worn by western bandits in movies. Even outside of the movies we often associate evil with black. Another example of the connotative meanings of colors would be the custom of dressing baby boys in blue and baby girls in pink. Eudora Welty may not use black hats or babies dressed in blue or pink, but she does use color to convey meaning. In "A Worn Path" color helps to develop the main character and both the place and the time of the setting.

Through color Ms. Welty helps us to better see Phoenix Jackson. Phoenix Jackson in the story wears a dark striped dress and a red rag on her head. The dark stripes show a simple sort of dress, not gaudy or showy, and the red rag adds a touch of color. The color of her clothes shows her to be simple but not dull. We see Phoenix as a simple woman with a good happy attitude toward life. Through color we also get a good picture of Phoenix's physical appearance. Ms. Welty describes Phoenix as an old Negro woman who has a touch of gold shining through her dark skin. By the use of color we also see the blue of her aged eyes, her small black freckled hands, and the black ringlets of her hair. Ms. Welty, by using color, gives us a good picture of both Phoenix Jackson's physical appearance and character.

Ms. Welty also uses color to describe places Phoenix sees as she makes her long trip to Natchez. Through color we see better the obstacles which Phoenix faces like the little green bush which turns out to be a thorn bush that catches her dress. We also see the big dead trees which look like black men with one arm standing among the purple stalks of the withered cotton. When Phoenix gets to the end of the fields and on the wagon trail, the colors change to silver and red. These colors show a brighter atmosphere in contrast to the dark trees of the field. When Phoenix gets past all the obstacles between her and Natchez, the town looks bright with color. Red, green, and silver shine everywhere. When she finally reaches the office, she sees the certificate, with its gold

frame and bright gold seal, hanging on the wall. The gold radiates a certain brightness. The brightest color found in the story appears here in the office, Phoenix Jackson's destination. Ms. Welty uses color to show the mood and physical appearance of the places Phoenix sees on her journey.

Another use of color would be the way Ms. Welty depicts the time of the year. Since we associate red, green, and silver with Christmas, she uses these colors to remind us of the season. We see these colors especially in Natchez's Christmas decorations and the packages of the woman who ties Phoenix's shoes, but Ms. Welty places these colors into the story long before the description of Natchez. We see early in the story the red rag on Phoenix's head and the green bush which catches her dress. Soon after this Ms. Welty describes the grass and trees as being silver. All through the story we see the colors of Christmas.

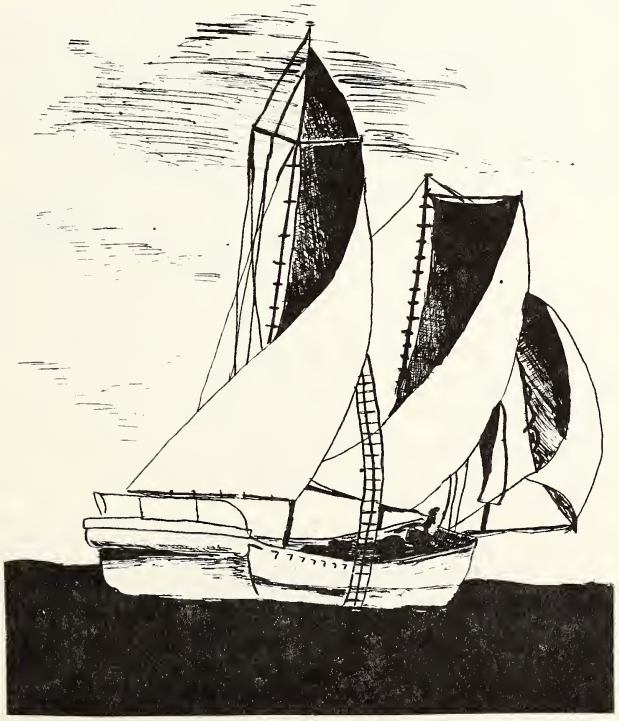
Ms. Welty shows us in "A Worn Path" how color can develop character and setting in a story. Color used in writing describes both physical appearance and mood. Colors have certain connotative meanings. Writers, like Ms. Welty, use our interpretations of colors to better convey ideas to us.

Sarah Haynes
First place formal essay senior division

Alienation in "The Secret Sharer"

Alienation is sometimes defined as "not in harmony with, alone." In Conrad's "The Secret Sharer" the Captain is a prime example of one who is alienated. He is not in harmony with his crew and ship; he is also alone. There are many factors that promote this feeling of alienation. The setting, the dialogue and the Captain's youth and inexperience are three of the most important factors.

The setting of the story is on board a ship in the Gulf of Siam. This fact alone makes the reader extremely aware of how alienated the Captain is. In the first few paragraphs of the story the Captain gives a description of the setting in his own words. He uses such phrases as "no sign of human habitation as far as the eye could reach" and "far from all human eyes." This gives the reader not only a physical picture of the setting but also a mental picture of how the setting makes the Captain feel alienated.



The fact that the dialogue of the Captain and Leggatt is in whispers also adds to the feeling of alienation by drawing a distinct line of separation between them and the rest of the crew. In almost every conversation between the two there is a reminder that they are whispering, "talking in our secret way" and the word "whispered" quite openly remind the reader of the low tone of conversation. There are also more subtle reminders including the use of descriptive words like "faintly," "murmured," and "breathed" regarding the dialogue. Thus Conrad carries out the feeling of alienation with dialogue.

The Captain's youth and inexperience also tend to alienate him. First, this is a new position to him. He has never been a Captain before so he has yet to prove himself. He has not been on board the ship long enough to be friends with anyone, and it is hard for him to learn to be a friend and Captain at the same time. The fact that he is younger than everyone except the second mate makes it doubly hard for him to be both leader and comrade. All of these factors together cause the Captain to withdraw from the men which in turn enforces his alienation.

Whether it is the setting, the dialogue or the Captain's youth and inexperience Conrad continually weaves into the story the feeling of alienation. The feeling is always there like a cloud hovering slightly above. The reader is never allowed to forget that the setting is alienated, the dialogue is whispered and the Captain is separated from his crew by his age and inexperience.

Jeanne Turnage
Second place formal essay senior division

Now What Do You See?

"I haven't seen Lance in twenty years. I doubt he's changed, though I have. He'll notice me now!"

The car door slammed. New York City lights brazenly illuminated the night as Dorothy confidently ascended the hotel steps.

The reunion was being held in the hotel convention hall. After twenty years, Taylor High's Class of '57 was being reunited. Dorothy Caston McMillian was attending for only one reason, to see Lance Brashton and to let him see her.

Passing a mirror in the lobby, Dorothy appraised her appearance for the hundredth time that evening. She was beautiful and she knew it. The many admiring glances she had received and would receive proved it. That hadn't always been the case, though. In high school Dorothy had been shy, overweight and rather mousey-looking. No one ever really took notice of her. She had been a typical "ugly duckling." Now a "swan," she'd show them!

She stepped into the elevator with that thought in mind, her pretty mouth set in a grim line of determination.

"Lance Brashton, Taylor High's version of 'Mr. Wonderful.' After tonight he'll wish he had taken more notice of me!" She winced as painful memories flooded her consciousness. Memories of the hours she had spent dreaming of wearing his massive class ring, the lonely Saturday nights she had spent at home and the prom gowns she never had.

One incident stuck out clearly in her mind. During lunch one day, Dorothy overheard Lance talking with his friends about the upcoming spring dance. "Hey, Lance, why don't you take Dorothy Caston to the dance?" Her heart and breathing stopped while her hopes soared – then plummeted when she heard him laugh.

"Dorothy Caston? Who's she? She's probably another one of those losers you guys are always trying to fix me up with!"

Dorothy moved away silently. As usual no one had noticed her.

She still bore the hurt of that day, but thought with satisfaction, "The roles have changed. Tonight I hold the ace."

As the elevator came to a halt, Dorothy donned her most winning smile. The doors opened like the curtains of a stage and she

made her entrance. Heads turned and murmurs of admiration rippled through the crowd of alumni. She was stunning.

"Dorothy! Oh, Dorothy! You look marvelous, dear! Surely you remember me! It's me! Mary Beth! You sat behind me in Mrs. Foggarty's geometry class!"

"Hello, Mary Beth. Yes, I remember you. Have you seen Lance Brashton?"

"Why, no, but do you remember the time . . ."

"Well, if it isn't Dorothy Caston!"

"Hello, Jack. Have you seen . . ."

"I always knew you'd make it some day! I said to myself, 'Jack,' I said, 'that girl . . .' "

"Excuse me, Jack."

"Dorothy! It's me, Dee Dee!"

"Dorothy, remember when . . ."

"Dorothy! . . ."

Dorothy spoke politely, though reluctantly with her former classmates. They had taken little notice of her in high school, but now everyone vied for the attentions of multimillionaire Wadsworth McMillian's widow. It was disgustingly hypocritical, but her mind wasn't on them. Her eyes sought Lance.

"He's not here. He didn't come." she sighed. She squinted and craned her neck in a last attempt to spot him.

"Excuse me, please." The voice startled her. As she turned, Lance and his guide dog brushed past and made their way through the crowd.

Madeline Davidson
Adams County Christian School
First place short story junior division

Raindrops Fall

Raindrops fall and puddle and pod
Memories come together and form tears
Then run together and fade leaving
A mist, gray

Almost
but never
quite
caught

Thought of once long ago, precious to one
Where once there were two,
Leave, leaving a

Sadness of something
gone
Forever.

Memories race like clouds in a wind and
Blow away in the mind, to disappear in a
Fog of time
Leaving a faint taste that returns and is

Almost
but never
quite
caught.

Sharon Smith
Brookhaven Academy
First place poetry junior division

One Late Cookie

I've done it again, and I feel it is an accomplishment! I have survived our annual Girl Scout Cookie sale. Some of you may be indifferent about this, but there are those who will find humor in my story.

It started when my troop was informed that this year the new Brownie troop would be selling cookies with us. We were told that it was our duty to set a good example. This was immediately taken as a challenge by all scouts who were present.

When I arrived home later that day, I found the doors of my neighborhood blocked by little girls in brown dresses. Thoughts of defeat went through my mind. I let out a sigh and went inside to change my shoes and prepare a selling technique.

After being told that "Two cute little Brownies have already been here," for about the twenty-fifth time during by first thirty minutes, I decided that it was time to get tough. I found myself begging at doors, only to be told that a Brownie had beaten me to it. Finally, the reason of their success and my failure came to my mind. The local Brownie troop meets the day before we do. They sold cookies yesterday, too. I felt beaten before my beginning.

Instead of admitting defeat to my peers, I decided to continue my sales with a fresh start -- tomorrow! Yes, when all else fails, put it off until tomorrow. There is a whole world to sell my cookies to, and it can all be successfully accomplished -- tomorrow.

I started my next day feeling that I could achieve anything. I was soon disenchanted. The little imps had plundered the territory I had so cautiously mapped for myself. What was to become of us, me and my little troop? Were we to be out-sold by a group of little girls that weren't even allowed to cross the street by themselves?

I later realized we had to make a plan, and make it quick. My troop had an emergency meeting that evening to find out what areas had not been covered. To see the courage in their eyes was a great help, but we needed ideas. The Brownies were ahead by forty boxes. Oh! would our nightmare never, never, ever end?

Then we got it. The idea was great! We set to work organizing all necessary details for the day. And then it was time. Girl Scout Cookies to be sold by Girl Scouts with the aid of Boy

Scouts! Our buyers really seemed to like our idea and placed large orders.

We outsold the Brownies this year, and with the money we raised, we have enough to give the Boy Scout troop a gift and treat the girls in our troop to . . . Girl Scout cookies!

This will be my end . . .

Ruthie Laws
Monticello High School
First place informal essay junior division

Microcosm is published, sometimes annually, sometimes biannually, at Copiah-Lincoln Junior College, Wesson, Mississippi. To encourage writing for the publication from the college students and from high school students in this district, the **Microcosm** staff sponsors a literary competition each spring.

Dr. Rosalie Daniels, Assistant Professor of English and Director of the School of Creative Writing at Mississippi College, judged the college entries for the competition this year.

Besides the junior division selections printed, the **Microcosm** staff selected the following entries as promising creative writing.

SHORT STORIES

"Howl In The Bayou" ..... Burnley Cook
Adams County Christian School
Second Place

"Pay The Price" ..... Tom Walden
Brookhaven High School
Third Place

POETRY

"A Poem For Father 'T'" ..... Rebecca Ann Pace
Adams County Christian School
Second Place

"Life" ..... Kendall Covington
Brookhaven Academy
Third Place

"Me" ..... Kim Baskin
Brookhaven High School
Third Place

"The Snow" ..... Madeline Davidson
Adams County Christian School
Honorable Mention

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	Page
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Bobette Cotten, ink wash	3
Etta Hill, pencil abstract	7
Janet Rice, pen and ink	8
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